



## DRAFT FOR TWP NEWSLETTER

### Terrorism

On September 11, 2001, the job of a police officer became even more dangerous. Police officers across the nation are now on the front lines in the war against terror. Many people don't realize that there isn't an immediate Federal response capability for terrorism that occurs in the United States. The State and local police have been tasked with this responsibility and the Department of Homeland Security has provided millions of dollars of funding to train and equip local police.

Our police officers are trained at the Awareness Level for Weapons of Mass Destruction incidents (WMD), and have been trained and issued Level C personal protective equipment (PPE). The PPE consists of a MSA Millennium gas mask, Tyvek chemical resistant suits, gloves, and over boots that can be used for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents. Each police officer that was issued the PPE had to take a physical fitness assessment and have respirator fit testing. The PPE was issued in a large black bag that is either carried in the officer's assigned patrol vehicle, or stored at the station. Funding for the equipment was provided by a Federal grant administered by the County's Department of Emergency Services through the Southeastern Counter-Terrorism Task Force.

In addition since 9/11 we have joined with six other municipalities: Downingtown Borough, Caln Township, Coatesville City, West Brandywine Township, Brandywine Regional PD, and Parkesburg Borough in the Western Chester County Emergency response team. This team will provide a tactical and crisis negotiator component to any of the member municipalities. We have two officers assigned to the team as operators, and another officer with his K-9 assigned as canine support. The team is used frequently to serve high risk warrants and will provide a vital tactical response for any active shooting, hostage/barricade incident or act of terrorism.

We have two officers assigned to the newly formed Chester County Mobile Emergency Response Team (MERT). The MERT is tasked to respond to major incidents throughout the County such as weapons of mass destruction incidents, civil disturbances, aircraft crashes, and any incident that requires a large organized response. They may be used throughout Southeastern PA to assist and augment other County and City of Philadelphia MERT teams.



The same Federal grant used to fund the equipment for the PPE was also used to issue a large amount of equipment to the WCCERT and MERT team members. The township is responsible for the care and maintenance of this equipment and is accountable for it.